

Message Text

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SECDEF FOR DSAA/ISA(SA) FROM CHARGE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS, VE

SUBJECT: POLICY ON USE OF FMS CREDIT FUNDS FOR VENEZUELA

REF: COMUSMILGPVEN 1615432 JUN 76 (NOTAL)

1. AS THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, THE ENACTMENT OF THE FOREIGN MILITARY AID BILL TERMINATED MAP-T FUNDS FOR VENEZUELA. CONSEQUENTLY, WE ARE SEEKING A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE TO CANCELLATION OF PREVIOUSLY PLANNED FY-77 MAP TRAINING. UNFORTUNATELY, THE CUMBERSOME GOV BUDGETARY SYSTEM ALL BUT OBVIATES USE OF HC FUNDS FOR THIS PURPOSE, AT LEAST UNTIL 1977. VENEZUELA USES A CY BUDGETING SYSTEM, AND SINCE IT IS IN THE MIDDLE OF ITS FUNDING YEAR, IT CANNOT GENERALLY OBLIGATE FUNDS FOR THIS PURPOSE WITHOUT GOING THROUGH A COMPLICATED AND TIME-CONSUMING PROCESS THE SUCCESS OF WHICH WOULD BE PROBLEMATIC IN ANY CASE. THUS, THE EMBASSY/MILGP SUGGESTED COURSE OF ACTION WHICH FOLLOWS OFFERS, WE BELIEVE, THE BEST CHANCE FOR CONTINUATION OF THE PLANNED TRAINING WHICH HAS BEEN DISRUPTED BECAUSE OF THE ENACTMENT OF THE FOREIGN MILITARY AID BILL INTO LAW.

2. FIRST, THE EMBASSY IS CONVINCED THAT FROM THE MILITARY POINT OF VIEW MAP-T IS WITHOUT DOUBT THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT

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ACTIVITY IN OUR RELATIONS WITH THE VENEZUELAN MILITARY, BOTH

IN THE SHORT AND LONG TERM. THIS TRAINING ENABLES THE VENEZUELAN MILITARY TO COME INTO CONTACT WITH U.S. METHODS AND PROCEDURES, AND MORE TO THE POINT, ALLOWS VENEZUELAN MILITARY ACCESS TO AND COMMUNICATION WITH THEIR U.S. COUNTERPARTS. THESE ACTIVITIES, CONSEQUENTLY, OFFER THE OPPORTUNITY FOR VENEZUELAN MILITARY TO BE FAVORABLY INFLUENCED IN MANY CASES BY THIS EXPERIENCE. CONSEQUENTLY, UNLESS SOME SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE TO THE SUDDEN CURTAILMENT OF TRAINING CAN BE DEvised, OUR OVERALL MILITARY EFFORT IN VENEZUELA WILL LOSE CREDIBILITY AND SUFFER. WE ARE OF THE OPINION THAT, AS SUGGESTED IN REFTEL (NOT REPEATED TO THE DEPARTMENT) THAT THE MILGP'S PROPOSAL OFFERS AN EFFECTIVE AND LEGALLY PERMISSIBLE MECHANISM TO BRIDGE THE CY 76 FINANCIAL GAP UNTIL THE GOV PLANS ITS CY 77 BUDGET.

3. IN ADDITION, WE NOTE THAT THE GOV AND DOD SIGNED A \$10 MILLION FMS-CREDIT AGREEMENT ON JUNE 28 AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN PRESIDENT PEREZ AND SECRETARY KISSINGER DURING THE LATTER'S FEBRUARY VISIT. THE SIGNING OF THIS AGREEMENT PARTIALLY OFFSETS THE LOSS OF MAP-T SUPPORT IN THE EYES OF THE VENEZUELAN MILITARY, BUT THIS VIEW WILL PROBABLY NOT PREVAIL FOR LONG, PARTICULARLY AS THE VENEZUELAN MOD HAS ALREADY BEGUN TO OBLIGATE THE CREDIT FUNDS. SINCE THE MILGP CANNOT DISCUSS THE PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE WITH MOD UNTIL WE RECEIVE WASHINGTON GUIDANCE, WE WOULD APPRECIATE A RAPID RESPONSE.

4. WHILE WE CANNOT ASSUME THAT THE MOD RESPONSE WILL BE POSITIVE, THE AUTHORIZATION TO OFFER THEM AN ALTERNATIVE WILL AT LEAST PERMIT US TO ADVISE THE MOD REGARDING WAYS TRAINING CAN BE CONTINUED. IN REGARD TO SPECIFIC TRAINING, ONE IMPORTANT PLAN WAS TO INCLUDE FLIGHT INSTRUCTION FOR A PRESIDENTIAL AIR CREW PILOT. MILGP IS SUMMARIZING PLANNED TRAINING BY SEPARATE MESSAGE.

5. GIVEN THE FOREGOING, I FULLY SUPPORT THE MILGP SUGGESTIONS CONTAINED REFTEL AND RECOMMEND WASHINGTON CONCURRENCE ASAP. ASECIO

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